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C O N F I D E N T I A L ABUJA 002152

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF; ALSO INL  
NSC FOR BYRNE AND FRAZER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/22/2011

TAGS: [SNAR](#) [KCRM](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: LAFIAJI ON NDLEA EFFORTS

REF: A. STATE 122773

[B](#). ABUJA 2118

[C](#). ABUJA 2117

[D](#). LAGOS 2179

(U) Classified by Ambassador Howard F. Jeter; Reasons 1.5 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) NDLEA Chairman Alhaji Bello Lafiaji called on Ambassador Jeter on August 27. The Ambassador informed Lafiaji that he had shared the non-paper on certification benchmarks with National Security Advisor Aliyu Mohammed and President Obasanjo. The President had informed the Ambassador that 250m Naira had been earmarked for the NDLEA, and would be released soon.

[1](#)2. (C) The Ambassador told Lafiaji that the U.S. was aware of his efforts, as was President Obasanjo. Lafiaji complained bitterly that he had done a great deal to improve the NDLEA, but was still struggling to get resources for the Agency (particularly for communications equipment and logistics), and to garner support and cooperation from Ministries and other government agencies. He said that he had personally filled-out 99 percent of the FATF survey, even though it was really the responsibility of the Ministry of Finance, and it still had not been sent. Lafiaji said that the NDLEA would work to meet every benchmark that was part of its portfolio, and he would try to get other Ministries and agencies to do their part. Lafiaji bemoaned the lack of cooperation he had received, particularly from the Ministry of Justice, and said that the Ministry was not playing its required role. However, assistance from some state governors for NDLEA zonal commands in their states has been excellent, and much better than expected.

[1](#)3. (C) The Ambassador asked Lafiaji if he planned to coordinate with ECOWAS on the NDLEA academy in Jos (Ref D). Lafiaji said he would, and observed that he was seeking a Ministerial-level endorsement from ECOWAS for the academy.

[1](#)4. (C) Lafiaji plans to travel to the U.S. for the UNGA to address the Third Committee (on October 3 or 4). He would appreciate meetings in Washington the day after his address in New York, and would like to meet with INL A/S Rand Beers, as well as State/AF, DEA, FBI, and perhaps the NSC. He told the Ambassador that he would inform the Embassy of the exact dates of his trip as soon as they are known.

[1](#)5. (C) COMMENT: Lafiaji has made a number of important changes in the NDLEA, including a merit-based promotion system. He also opposed politicizing the Agency, including appointments of political cronies. He has also made himself readily available to the Embassy, and has stated his willingness to address Embassy concerns. However, there seems to be little he can do to make other agencies and Ministries more actively engaged, despite his active lobbying. He expressed strong frustration with others in the GON, and reacted somewhat defensively when the Ambassador said that not enough was being done. Embassy will watch for improved GON performance as a result of President Obasanjo's infusion of much needed money into the NDLEA and recent high-level approaches on the counter-narcotics benchmarks.

[1](#)6. (C) COMMENT CONTINUED: On August 29, Lafiaji called the Ambassador to inform him that 60 kg of cocaine had been seized from a ship from Brazil at Tin Can Island (Lagos). Lafiaji described this as the single largest interdiction since the beginning of his tenure. Embassy will report on this potentially significant development as more information becomes available. END COMMENT.  
Jeter